

CHAP, xii *INFLUENCE OF MOTHER-KIN ON RELIGION* 211

answer to the clubs or associations of the men.¹ And to take another example, the Melanesians, like the Khasis and the Pelew Islanders,, have the system of mother-kin, being similarly divided into exogamous clans with descent in the female line; " but it must be understood that the mother is in no way the head of the family. The house of the family is the father's, the garden is his, the rule and government are his." ²

We may safely assume that the practice has been the same among all the many peoples who have retained the ancient system of mother-kin under a monarchical constitution. In -Africa, for example, the chieftainship or

kingship often descends in the female line, but it is men, the female

not women, who inherit it. The theory of a gynæcocracy is in truth a dream of visionaries and pedants. And equally religion

chimerical is the idea that the predominance of goddesses under a system of mother-kin like that of the Khasis is a

creation of the female mind. If women ever created gods,

they would be more likely to give them masculine than

feminine features. In point of fact the great religious ideals

which have permanently impressed themselves on the world

seem always to have been a product of the male imagination.

Men make gods and women worship them. The combina-

tion of ancestor-worship with mother-kin furnishes a simple

and sufficient explanation of the superiority of goddesses

over gods in a state of society where these conditions prevail.

Men naturally assign the first place in their devotions to

the ancestress from whom they trace their descent. We

need not resort to a fantastic hypothesis of the preponderance of the feminine fancy in order to account for the facts.

The theory that under a system of mother-kin the women rule the men and set up goddesses for them to

J. Kubary, *Die sodalen Einrichtungen*, pp. 35, 39 sq., always ruled by a queen (*The River of* 73-83. See also above, pp. 204 sq. *Golden-Sand*, London, iSSo, i. 3⁰⁵)-

² R. H. Cochrington, *The Melanesians* (Oxford, 1891), p. 34. But Capt. Gill was not nearer to the tribe than a six days' journey;

³ See A. H. Post, *Afrikamsche* and even if his report is correct we *fitri-spridenz* (Oldenburg and Leipsic, may suppose that the real power is '1887), i. 140 sq. Captain W. Gill exercised by men, just as it is in the reports that the Su-Mu, a Man-Tzu solitary Khasi tribe which is nominally tribe in Southern China numbering governed by a woman.